

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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DRAFTED BY NEA/PAB:MAUSTRIAN:DE
APPROVED BY NEA/PAB:PWLANDE
PENTAGON:RADMIRAL BARROW
-----252034Z 043765 /63
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY DACCA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 120828

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, BD, US

SUBJECT:ADMIRAL KHAN'S MEETING WITH CNO ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY

1. DEPUTY CHIEF MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR KHAN, ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR SIDDIQI AND MINISTER KABIR CALLED ON CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY ON MAY 23. REAR ADMIRAL BARROW (DIRECTOR, POLITICO-MILITARY POLICY DIVISION) AND MICHAEL AUSTRIAN (PAB) SAT IN.
2. ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY CONGRATULATED ADMIRAL KHAN FOR HIS APPOINTMENT TO AN ADDITIONAL THREE YEARS AS CHIEF OF NAVAL STAFF. IN TURN, ADMIRAL KHAN THANKED ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY FOR ACCEPTING A BANGLADESH NOMINEE FOR THE NAVAL WAR COLLEGE AND, IN GENERAL, FOR OFFERING MILITARY TRAINING TO BANGLADESH. HE DISCUSSED IN SOME DETAIL BANGLADESH'S REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIALIZED TRAINING, EMPHASIZING HIS DESIRE TO GET BANGLADESH'S CANDIDATES INTO REGULAR, AS OPPOSED TO
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FOREIGN NATIONAL, COURSES.

3. ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY ADVISED KHAN TO SUBMIT HIS REQUESTS VIA NORMAL CHANNELS AND TOLD HIM THAT THE U.S. NAVY WILL SUPPORT REQUESTS WHICH APPEAR TO MEET BANGLADESH'S LEGITIMATE NEEDS. KHAN OBJECTED THAT LAST YEAR'S REQUEST HAD BEEN SUBMITTED THROUGH THE STATE DEPARTMENT WITH THE RESULT

THAT THE BANGLADESH NAVY OBTAINED ONLY ONE POSITION. ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY POINTED OUT THAT STATE AND DOD WORK VERY CLOSELY ON ALL TRAINING ISSUES AND THAT, WHILE WE TRY TO BE AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE, THERE ARE BUDGETARY AND COURSE AVAILABILITY CONSTRAINTS. WITH THE INCREASED FUNDS WE ANTICIPATE HAVING NEXT YEAR, WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO OFFER MORE POSITIONS TO THE BANGLADESH MILITARY.

4. KHAN NEXT RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF BANGLADESH NAVY OBTAINING SOME MINESWEEPERS AND PATROL GUNBOATS FROM THE UNITED STATES. BANGLADESH WOULD LIKE MINESWEEPERS TO COUNTER THE DANGER OF MINES IN THE BAY OF BENGAL. ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY POINTED OUT THAT THIS REQUEST WAS VERY DIFFERENT FROM BANGLADESH'S FORMER STATED PURPOSE OF SEEKING VESSELS FOR HYDROGRAPHIC RESEARCH. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE ONLY VESSEL WE CAN OFFER (MSC TYPE MINESWEEPER) NO LONGER HAS A MINESWEEPING CAPABILITY. MOST U.S. MINESWEEPING OPERATIONS ARE CONDUCTED BY HELICOPTERS TOWING SLEDS, NOT BY SURFACE VESSELS.

5. KHAN THEN CHANGED SUBJECT TO PATROL GUNBOATS. HE INDICATED THAT THE PREVIOUS SECRETARY OF THE NAVY HAD STATED THAT BANGLADESH COULD POSSIBLY GET SOME PATROL GUNBOATS ON A SURPLUS BASIS. ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY EXPLAINED IN DETAIL CONGRESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE TRANSFER OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND REMINDED ADMIRAL KHAN THAT, DURING THEIR MEETING IN NEWPORT LAST JULY, HE HAD TOLD KHAN THAT THE PATROL GUNBOATS WERE NOT IN SURPLUS, COULD NOT BE RELEASED, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND WOULD BE VERY EXPENSIVE TO ACQUIRE UNDER MILITARY SALES PROGRAM. IF THE PREVIOUS SECRETARY OF THE NAVY HAD SAID THAT PATROL GUNBOATS WERE AVAILABLE ON A SURPLUS BASIS, HE WAS MISINFORMED.

6. RETURNING TO MINESWEEPERS, ADMIRAL KHAN STATED THAT BANGLADESH NEEDS A MINIMUM OF FOUR VESSELS TO GIVE ITS NAVY A MINESWEEPING CAPABILITY. HE ASKED ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY IF U.S. NAVY HAD ANYTHING BESIDE MSC'S WHICH MIGHT BE AVAILABLE. ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY RESPONDED THAT THE ONLY U.S. NAVY OPERABLE MINESWEEPERS (MSOS) ARE NOT SURPLUS AND WILL NOT BE SO IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. IN SHORT, WHILE ONE MSC IS AVAILABLE THE MINESWEEPING CAPABILITY IS NOT SUPPORTABLE BY THE U.S. NAVY. MSOS ARE SUPPORTABLE, BUT THEY ARE NOT AVAILABLE AND WILL NOT BECOME AVAILABLE AS SURPLUS EQUIPMENT AT ANY TIME SOON.

7. ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY NOTED THAT WE HAD CHECKED THE U.S. INVENTORY AND THERE SIMPLY IS NO EQUIPMENT WHICH CAN BE

SENT TO GIVE BANGLADESH A MINESWEEPING CAPABILITY. BANGLADESH COULD REFIT MSC'S WITH OTHER GEAR, BUT THIS WOULD BE VERY EXPENSIVE. ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY CONCLUDED THAT IT WOULD BE REPREHENSIBLE FOR THE UNITED STATES TO OFFER BANGLADESH SHIPS WHICH WE KNOW WON'T WORK AND IT WOULD BE TO NO ONES ADVANTAGE FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO HOLD OUT FALSE HOPES.

8. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT THE COST OF FLETCHER CLASS DESTROYERS, KHAN WAS TOLD THAT THE US NAVY HAS NO VESSELS OF THIS TYPE IN THE RESERVE OR REGULAR FLEETS. SOME GEARING CLASS DESTROYERS ARE IN OPERATION, BUT THEY COST APPROXIMATELY 400,000 DOLLARS AND A TRANSFER WOULD REQUIRE CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.

9. KHAN CONCLUDED THE MEETING BY ASKING WHETHER THE U.S. GOVERNMENT COULD ASSIST BANGLADESH IN BUILDING UP ITS CONFIDENTIAL

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NAVY IN SOME WAY OTHER THAN TRAINING. ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY POINTED OUT THAT WE HAD BEEN WILLING TO PROVIDE A MSC FOR HYDROGRAPHIC WORK BUT THIS HAD CHANGED TO A REQUEST FOR FUNCTIONAL MINESWEEPERS -- WHICH ARE NOT AVAILABLE. KHAN WAS ASSURED THAT THE US GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO LOOK FOR WAYS TO HELP BANGLADESH AND WILL DO WHAT IS POSSIBLE. VANCE

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